

CITY OF SAINT PAUL
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

FILE NAME: 247 East Fourth Street
DATE OF APPLICATION: April 5, 2016
APPLICANT: Kaas Wilson Architects, Ryan DuPuis
OWNER: VoR Development
HPC SITE/DISTRICT: Lowertown Heritage Preservation District
CATEGORY: Rehabilitation
CLASSIFICATION: Contributing
STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: Bill Dermody
DATE: April 21, 2016

A. SITE DESCRIPTION: The Michaud Brothers Building, also known as the Jax Manufacturing Company Building, is a five-story brick Classical Revival style building with a large pressed metal cornice with modillions and large brackets, and brick piers between large expanses of windows. It was built in 1909 at a cost of \$131,000 for the Michaud Brothers grocery business. The structure was built by the Butler Brothers firm but the architect is unknown since the original building permit is lost. The Michaud Brothers (Narcisse, Charles, and Achille) were of French Canadian origin and came to St. Paul in 1854. Their firm was known first as Michaud and Company, and renamed Michaud and Brothers in about 1878. In 1881 Edward Neill and J. Fletcher Williams wrote that in that year the business of the firm was "expected to reach \$250,000, the largest retail firm west of Chicago." The Jax Manufacturing Company which makes automobile seat covers moved into the building along with a luggage store. To the west of this building is a vacant lot which was the site of the Robinson and Cary Railway Supplies and Machinery building, shown in Donnelly's 1892 Atlas of the City of St. Paul. There are significant painted "ghost" signs on the east elevation that relate to the Jax era and use. The building is classified as Contributing to the Lowertown Heritage Preservation District.

B. PROPOSED CHANGES: The applicant proposes a series of rehabilitation and new construction elements in pursuit of converting the building to an apartment use with retail on the first level, including:

1. Demolition of non-historic, 1-story garage east of the building to allow for parking.
2. 16 new window openings with aluminum, double-hung windows on west façade.
3. New doors and metal stair at rear (north) loading dock.
4. Resurfacing the roof.
5. Adding three new light fixtures to the south façade for uplighting.
6. Reattaching and repainting loose sheet metal on south façade cornice.
7. Repairing existing windows.
8. Replacing panels with spandrel glazing on storefront transom windows.
9. Repointing damaged mortar.
10. Repairing spalled concrete on north façade.
11. Repairing skylights' glazing and repainting.

C. BACKGROUND:

The applicant team had preliminary project discussions onsite with HPC staff. The project is also applying for federal and state historic tax credits.

D. GUIDELINE CITATIONS:

Historic Lowertown Heritage Preservation District, Guidelines for Design Review

Sec. 74-112. - Preservation program.

I. *New construction.* The basic principle for new construction in the Lowertown area is to maintain the scale and character of present buildings. New construction refers to totally new structures, moved in structures, and new additions to existing structures undergoing restoration and rehabilitation.

G. *Parking.* Parking lots should be screened from street and sidewalk either by walls or plantings or both. If walls are used, their materials should be compatible with the walls of existing adjacent buildings. Walls should be at least eighteen (18) feet high. Walls or plantings should continue the planes of existing adjacent buildings.

II. *Restoration and rehabilitation.*

General Principles for Restoration and Rehabilitation

a. All work should be of a character and quality that maintain the distinguishing features of the building and the environment. The removal of architectural features is not permitted.

b. Deteriorated architectural features such as cornices, chimneys and roof treatment, window and door openings, and exterior surface treatment should be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. In the event of replacement, new materials should match the original in composition, design, color, texture and appearance. Duplication of the original design based on physical or pictorial evidence is preferable to using conjectural or "period" designs or using part of other buildings.

c. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship characteristic of structures of a period should be treated sensitively. Furthermore, if changes in use of a building are contemplated, they should be accomplished with minimum alteration to the structure and fabric.

d. In general it is expected that buildings will be restored to their original appearance. However, alterations to buildings are sometimes worthy of preservation because they reflect a significant period of history of the buildings and the district. This significance should be respected and restoration to an "original" appearance may not always be desirable. All buildings should be recognized as products of their own time and not be altered to resemble buildings from another era.

A. *Masonry and walls.*

a. Use of materials: Original masonry and mortar should be retained whenever possible without the application of any surface treatment. A similar material should be used to repair or replace, where necessary, deteriorated masonry. New masonry added to the structure or site, such as new foundations

or retaining walls, should be compatible with the color, texture, and bonding of the original or existing masonry. Formstone, stucco, wood or metal siding or paneling should not be used.

b. Cleaning: Masonry should be cleaned only when necessary to halt deterioration or to remove graffiti and stains and always with the gentlest method possible such as low pressure water (under 300 psi) and soft bristle brushes. Brick and stone surfaces should not be sandblasted with dry or wet grit or other abrasives. This method of cleaning erodes the hard surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. Chemical cleaning products which could have an adverse chemical reaction with the masonry material such as acid on limestone or marble should not be used. It is preferable to use water with a non-ionic biodegradable detergent. Mortar should be repointed and window frames should be caulked before cleaning. Waterproof or water repellent coatings or surface consolidation treatments should not be applied unless required to solve a specific technical problem that has been studied and identified. Coatings are frequently unnecessary, expensive, and can accelerate deterioration of the masonry.

c. Repointing: Repointing should only be done on those mortar joints where there is evidence of moisture problems or when sufficient mortar is missing to allow water to stand on the mortar joint. Using pneumatic hammers to move mortar can seriously damage the adjacent brick. Vertical joints should be hand chiseled. When repointing, it is important to use the same materials as the existing mortar. This includes matching the color, texture, coefficients of expansion and contraction, and ingredient ratio of the original mortar mix, creating a bond similar to the original. A professional mortar analysis can give this information. Repointing with Portland cement mortar may create a bond stronger than is appropriate for the building materials, possibly resulting in cracking or other damage. Old mortar should be duplicated in joint size, method of applications and joint profile.

d. Painting: The original or early color and texture of masonry surfaces should be retained. Brick or stone surfaces may have been painted or whitewashed for practical and aesthetic reasons. Paint should not be indiscriminately removed from masonry surfaces as this may subject the building to damage and change its appearance.

B. *Windows and doors.*

a. Openings: Existing window and door openings should be retained. New window and door openings should not be introduced into the principal visible elevations. Enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit stock window sash or new stock door sizes should not be done. Infilling of window openings may be permissible on minor facades if standard sizes approximate the size and proportions of the opening. Generally, a minor facade will be considered as any facade not facing the street and not having the ornamentation and higher quality materials usually associated with street facades.

b. Panes, Sashes and Hardware: It is desirable to retain original windows and doors, but they may need replacement for functional reasons. Replacement is

clearly acceptable for functional reasons if new materials closely match original materials. Different materials may be acceptable on a case-by-case basis. Window panes should be two-way glass. No reflective glass is permitted. The stylistic period or periods a building represents should be respected. Shutters are generally inappropriate in the district. Missing or irreparable windows should be replaced with new windows that match the original in material, size, general muntin and mullion proportion and configuration and reflective qualities of the glass. Replacement sash should not alter the setback relationship between window and wall. Heating and air conditioning units should not be installed in the window frames when the sash and frames may be damaged. Window installations should be considered only when all other viable heating and cooling systems would result in significant damage to historic materials. Window installations may be acceptable in minor facades.

c. Storm Windows: Storm windows and doors should be compatible with the character of the building and should not damage window and door frames, or require removal of original windows and doors. Exterior storm windows should be appropriate in size and color and should be operable.

d. Awnings and canopies: Awnings and canopies should not be used when they conceal richly detailed entries and windows. Aluminum or plastic awnings should not be used. Large and historically inappropriate lettering should not be used on awnings.

e. Lintels, arches and sills: Lintels, sills, architraves, pediments, hoods and steps should be retained or repaired if possible. Existing colors and textures should be matched when repairing these elements.

f. Storefronts: Existing storefronts should be retained and repaired including windows, sash, doors, transoms, signage, and decorative features where such features contribute to the architectural and historic character of the building. Where original or early storefronts no longer exist or are too deteriorated to save, the commercial character of the building should be retained through: 1) contemporary design which is compatible with the scale, design, materials, color and texture of the historic buildings; or 2) an accurate restoration of the storefront based on historical research and physical evidence. Storefronts or new design elements on the ground floor, such as arcades, should not be introduced which alter the architectural and historic character of the building and its relationship with the street or its setting or which cause the destruction of significant historic fabric. Materials which detract from the historic or architectural character of the building, such as mirrored glass, should not be used. Entrances through significant storefronts should not be altered.

C. *Roofs, cornices and details.*

a. Roof shape: The original roof shape should be preserved. New skylights and vents should be behind and below parapet level. When the roof is visible from street level, the original material should be retained if possible, otherwise it should be replaced with new material that matches the old in composition, size, shape, color and texture.

- b. Cornices and other details: All architectural features that give the roof its essential character should be preserved or replaced. Similar material should be used to repair/replace deteriorating or missing architectural elements such as cornices, brackets, railings, shutters, steps and chimneys, whenever possible. The intricacy of detail is least important for new elements at or near the roof lines. The same massing, proportions, scale and design theme as the original should be retained.

III. *Signs and accessories.* Signs should be compatible with the character of the District, and blend with the character of the structures on or near which they are placed. Signs should not conceal architectural detail, clutter or detract from the intended facade; but rather complement the overall design of the building and the period in which it was built.

D. *Lighting.* Location of exterior lights should be appropriate to the structure. Signs should generally be lit from on the site. There should be no flashing, blinking, moving, or varying intensity lighting. Subdued lighting is preferred. Backlit fluorescent or exposed neon are generally inappropriate.

IV. Demolition. The heritage preservation commission will follow the guidelines stated in the Heritage Preservation Ordinance (#16006), Section 6 (1) (2), when reviewing permit applications for demolition:

"In case of the proposed demolition of a building, prior to approval of said demolition, the commission shall make written findings on the following: architectural and historical merit of the building, the effect on surrounding buildings, the effect of any proposed construction on the remainder of the building (in case of partial demolition) and on surrounding buildings, the economic value or usefulness of building as it now exists, or if altered or modified in comparison with the value or usefulness of any propose structures designated to replace the present building or buildings."

E. FINDINGS:

1. On March 22, 1984, the Historic Lowertown Heritage Preservation District was established under Ordinance No. 17120, § 2. The Heritage Preservation Commission shall protect the architectural character of heritage preservation sites through review and approval or denial of applications for city permits for exterior work within designated heritage preservation sites §73.04.(4). The property is categorized as contributing to the Lowertown Heritage Preservation District.
2. **Demolition. §74-112.IV:** The 1-story garage proposed for demolition east of the building does not have historic significance. It was constructed between 1923 and 1957 based on staff analysis, and was not recognized in the original Lowertown nomination that focused on the period of significance of 1867 to 1929. It has not attained historic significance individually. The garage's demolition will not affect the surrounding buildings or any of the proposed rehabilitation, nor negatively impact their economic value or usefulness. Where the garage is currently attached, the masonry wall and its condition should be assessed for any hidden historic features that may require sensitive treatment.
3. **Parking §74-112.I.G:** The new parking lot to the east *should be screened from street and sidewalk either by walls or plantings or both. If walls are used, their materials should be compatible with the walls of existing adjacent buildings. Walls should be at least eighteen (18) feet high. Walls or plantings should continue the planes of existing adjacent buildings.*

If the parking lot to the west will be resurfaced or rebuilt – more than just restriped – then it should also provide such screening.

3. **General principles §74-112.II.a:** The proposed *repair* of cornice sheet metal and spalled concrete materials, rather than *replacement*, is an appropriate approach.
4. **Repointing §74-112.II.A.a-c:** The proposed repointing should involve hand chiseling of vertical joints, while *matching the color, texture, coefficients of expansion and contraction, and ingredient ratio of the original mortar mix* to create a bond similar to the original. *Old mortar should be duplicated in joint size, method of applications and joint profile.* Mortar specifications have not yet been provided. Any repointing work must also treat the ghost signs with sensitivity.
5. **Windows and doors, openings §74-112.II.B.a:** The existing window and door openings are appropriately retained. The new rear door openings are appropriately not on a principal visible elevation. The west façade's 16 new window openings are on a secondary elevation, though they are plainly visible, which is generally discouraged. The proposed 16 new window openings on the west façade generally relate to the existing windows on the east façade *in terms of solid to opening ratio, distribution of window openings, and window setback*, though the window setback from the front facade is a few feet less. They are double-hung of a similar size and proportion to those on the east façade, yet differentiated by the straight header as compared to the existing windows' arch headers. The new windows are proposed to be aluminum, but should be wood in order to follow the guidelines unless they receive approval for a different material through their National Register review for tax credits.
6. **Windows and doors, panes, sashes and hardware §74-112.II.B.b:** Existing windows and doors are being retained; except the ground-level storefront windows, all of the wood (south and east) and steel (north) windows are to be repaired as detailed in the attached plans.
7. **Storefronts §74-112.II.B.a-e:** The existing storefronts are appropriately retained, with the spandrel glazing present on some of the storefront transom windows to be replaced by clear windows to match the other transoms.
8. **Skylights, roof, cornices and other details §74-112.II.C.a-b:** The existing skylights, which give the roof its essential character, will be appropriately retained and repaired. The new roof surface is similar in appearance to that of existing, and should be a gray or darker tone. If there is any terra cotta coping, it should be preserved and protected from damage.
9. **Lighting §74-112.III.D:** The proposed uplighting should be subdued. Conduit should be limited and be installed so as to not damage the brick or other significant architectural elements.
10. **Rear loading dock:** The rear loading dock is appropriately retained. Details regarding its new stairway, the new doors to the building interior, and any railings or other related improvements have not been provided.
11. This project is also pursuing federal and state investment tax credits. Accordingly, National Parks Service review may result in additional conditions and project guidance.
12. The proposal will not adversely affect the program for preservation and architectural control of the Lowertown Heritage Preservation District (Leg. Code 73.06 (e)) so long as the conditions are met.

F. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the findings, staff recommends approval of the building permit application provided the following condition(s) are met:

1. When complete, any reviews by SHPO or the National Parks Service shall be provided to HPC staff for review. These reviews could result in the need for additional HPC review or conditions.
2. All new glass shall be two-way and have no reflective, tinted, or mirrored qualities.
3. The western elevation windows shall be wood rather than aluminum, unless SHPO review allows for aluminum or aluminum-clad.
4. All final materials, colors and details shall be submitted to the HPC and/or staff for final review and approval, including mortar specifications, rear stair and guardrail details, roof color details, and conduit.
5. All pavement, screening and planting details associated with the parking lots will require review by HPC and City staff.
6. Every effort shall be made to preserve the east elevation's historic ghost sign.
7. Any revisions to the approved plans shall be reviewed and approved by the HPC and/or staff.
8. No signage is included in this approval and must be submitted separately.
9. Any terra cotta coping on the roof must be retained and protected from damage.
10. The HPC stamped approved plans shall remain on site for the duration of the project. If an updated set of plans is submitted for City permits, HPC staff shall receive a full size set for final review in order to determine compliance with the HPC decision and conditions.

G. ATTACHMENTS:

1. Application
2. Applicant site photos
3. Submitted plans



Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission
Department of Planning and Economic Development
25 Fourth Street West, Suite 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102
Phone: (651) 266-9078
ApplyHPC@stpaul.gov

HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION

This application must be completed in addition to the appropriate city permit application if the affected property is an individually designated landmark or located within an historic district. For applications that must be reviewed by the Heritage Preservation Commission refer to the HPC Meeting schedule for meeting dates and deadlines.

1. CATEGORY

Please check the category that best describes the proposed work

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Repair/Rehabilitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign/Awning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Construction/Addition/Alteration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moving | <input type="checkbox"/> Fence/Retaining Wall | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Application Review Only |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

2. PROJECT ADDRESS

Street and number: 247 East Fourth Street Zip Code: 55101

3. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of contact person: Ryan DuPuis

Company: Kaas Wilson Architects

Street and number: 1301 American Blvd E. Suite 100

City: Bloomington State: MN Zip Code: 55425

Phone number: (612) 223-7960 e-mail: ryand@kaaswilson.com

4. PROPERTY OWNER(S) INFORMATION (If different from applicant)

Name: VoR Development/VoR Jax, LLC ATTN: Kyle Morque

Street and number: 5035 2nd Avenue South

City: Minneapolis State: MN Zip Code: 55419

Phone number: (917) 858-1411 e-mail: kmorque@vordevelopment.com

5. PROJECT ARCHITECT (If applicable)

Contact person: Ryan DuPuis

Company: Kaas Wilson Architects

Street and number: 1301 American Blvd E.

City: Bloomington State: MN Zip Code: 55425

Phone number: (612) 223-7960 e-mail: ryand@kaaswilson.com

6. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Completely describe ALL exterior changes being proposed for the property. Include changes to architectural details such as windows, doors, siding, railings, steps, trim, roof, foundation or porches. Attach specifications for doors, windows, lighting and other features, if applicable, including color and material samples.

Demolition of non-historic cmu walls and asphalt shingle roof garage on east facade and repaving for parking, see sheets A210 and A215. Adding metal stair to loading dock on north loading dock for egress, see sheets A315 and A502. New windows and openings in west facade, matching size, shape and profile of historic windows and openings on east facade, see sheets A501 and A842. Removing existing roofing a down to existing concrete structural deck and replacing with fully adhered EPDM system on tapered insulation, see A260, A370 and A800. Adding new exterior lighting fixtures to the south facade, see sheet A500. Reattaching loose sheet metal on cornice on south facade and repainting, see A500. Replacing broken glazing on historic skylights, repainting and reglazing, see A500 and A501. Refurbishing existing wood and steel windows to remain, see A500, A503, A840 and A841. Replacing spandrel glazing on existing aluminum storefront, see sheet A500. Repointing mortar on west, north and east facade where structurally unstable, see sheet A501, A502 and A503. Repairing areas of spalled concrete on north facade where structural reinforcing has been exposed, see sheet A502. Refurbishing existing steel windows to remain, see sheets A502 and A840.

Attach additional sheets if necessary

7. ATTACHMENTS

Please list any attachments that are included in this application. Refer to the [Design Review Application Process Checklist](#) for required information or attachments.

- Architectural drawing sheets
- Photographs of affected areas with photo key

Attach the above listed to this application or attach in an email to ApplyHPC@stpaul.gov

Will any federal money be used in this project?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you applying for the Investment Tax Credits?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

I, the undersigned, understand that the Design Review Application is limited to the aforementioned work to the affected property. I further understand that any additional exterior work to be done under my ownership must be submitted by application to the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission. Any unauthorized work will be required to be removed.

Signature of applicant: Ryan DuPuis

Digitally signed by Ryan DuPuis
DN: C=US, E=ryan@kaaswilson.com, O=Kaas
Wilson Architects, CN=Ryan DuPuis
Date: 2016.03.08 13:34:40-05'00'

Date: 3/7/2016

Signature of owner: Kyle Mow

Date: 3/9/16

Send completed application with the necessary attachments to ApplyHPC@stpaul.gov or to:

Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission
Department of Planning and Economic Development
25 Fourth Street West, Suite 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102

FOR HPC OFFICE USE ONLY

Date received: 4.5.16 at counter FILE NO. _____

Date complete: _____

District: LT /Individual Site: _____

Pivotal/Contributing/Non-contributing/New Construction/Parcel

☐ Requires staff review

Supporting data: YES NO
Complete application: YES NO
The following condition(s) must be met in order for application to conform to preservation program:

It has been determined that the work to be performed pursuant to the application does not adversely affect the program for preservation and architectural control of the heritage preservation district or site (Ch.73.06).

HPC staff approval

Date _____

☐ Requires Commission review

Submitted:

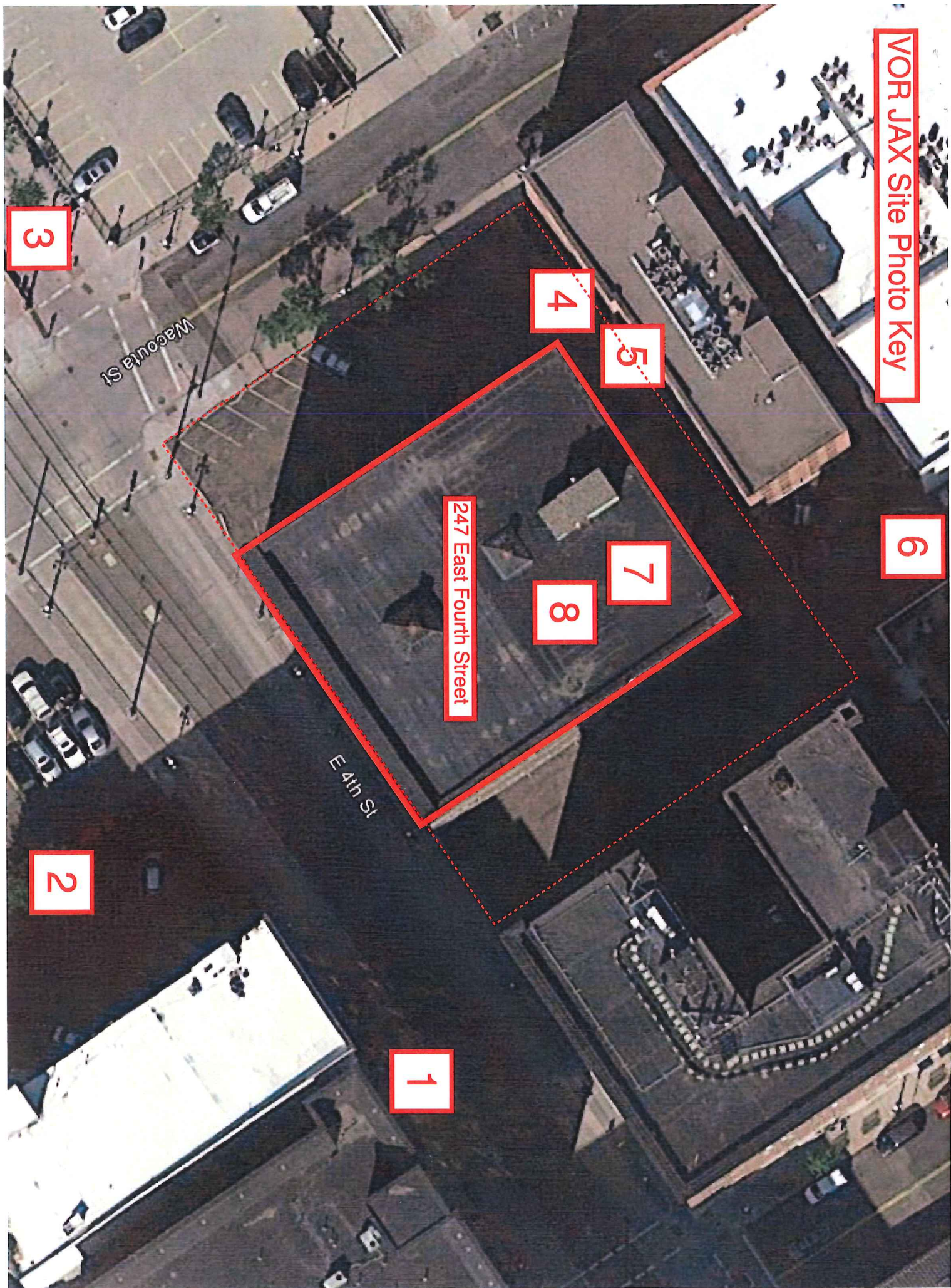
- ☐ 3 Sets of Plans
- ☐ 15 Sets of Plans reduced to 8 ½" by 11" or 11" by 17"
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ CD of Plans (pdf) & Photos (jpg)
- ☐ City Permit Application
- ☐ Complete HPC Design Review application

Hearing Date set for: _____

City Permit # ____ - _____

HPC Staff Notes

VOR JAX Site Photo Key



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5

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247 East Fourth Street

2

1

Wacouta St

E 4th St

Reattaching loose sheet metal
on cornice on south facade,
see sheet A500.

Repainting
sheet metal
cornice, see
sheet A500.

Refurbishing existing
wood windows to
remain, see sheet
A500 and A841.

Refurbish existing
wood windows to
remain, see sheet
A500 and A841.

Refurbishing existing
wood windows to
remain, see sheets
A500 and A841.

Refurbishing existing
wood windows to
remain, see sheets
A500 and A841.

Replacing spandrel glazing
on existing aluminum
storefront, see sheet A500.

Remove paint from
transom glazing

Repointing mortar where
structurally unstable, see sheet
A501

New windows and openings on
this facade, to match historic
windows and openings on east
facade, see sheets A501 and
A842.





Repointing mortar where structurally unstable, see sheet A502.

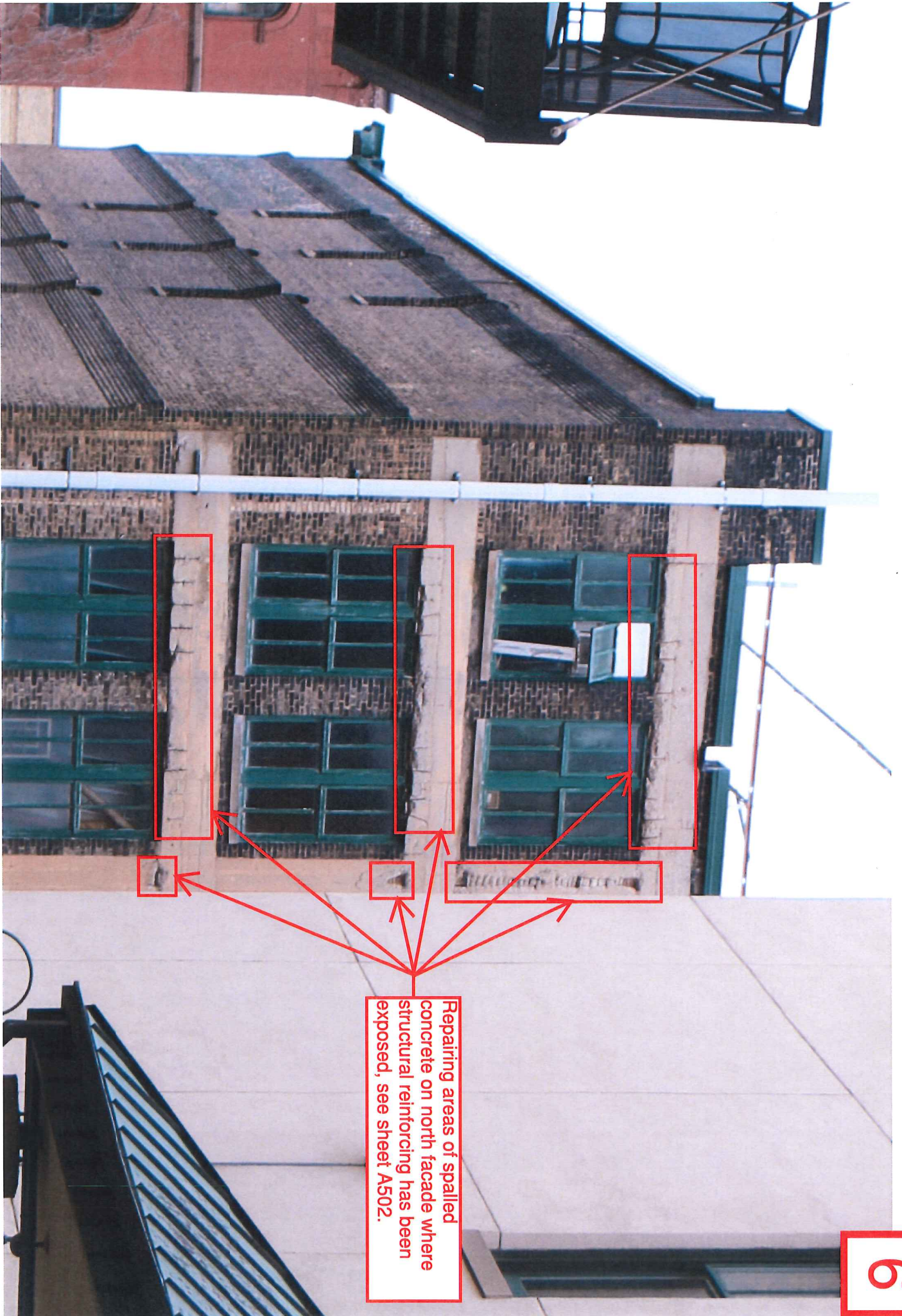
Repairing areas of spalled concrete on north facade where structural reinforcing has been exposed, see sheet A502.

Refurbishing existing steel windows to remain, see sheets A502 and A840. (Typical, all windows on this facade.)

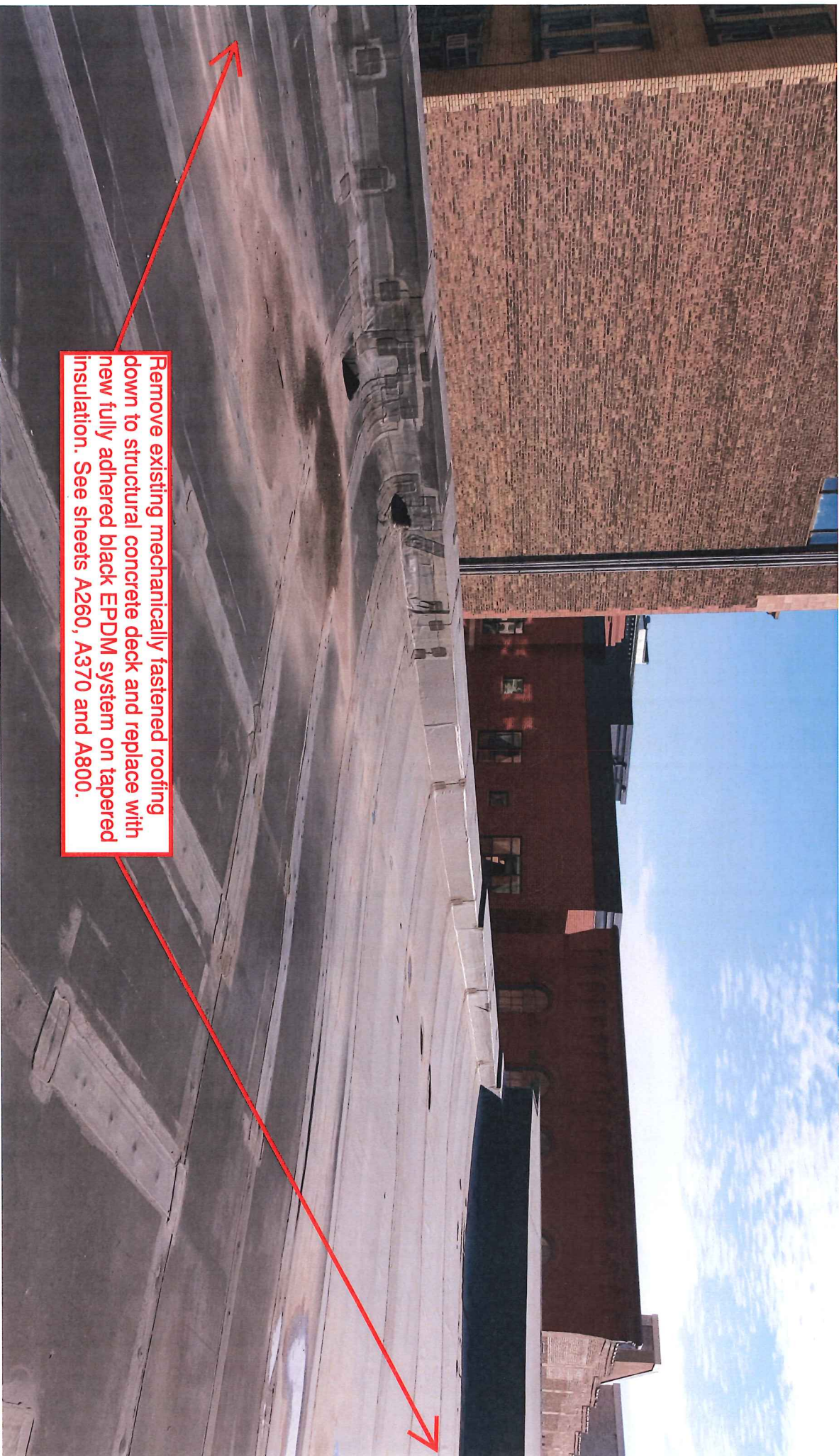
Adding metal stair to loading dock
on north facade for egress, see
sheets A315 and A502.



NO PARKING
DO NOT BLOCK DOCK
VIOLATORS WILL BE TOWED
AT THEIR OWN RISK AND WITHOUT NOTICE



Repairing areas of spalled concrete on north facade where structural reinforcing has been exposed, see sheet A502.



Remove existing mechanically fastened roofing down to structural concrete deck and replace with new fully adhered black EPDM system on tapered insulation. See sheets A260, A370 and A800.

